

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

OF MICHIGAN

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THREE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SECOND MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Thursday, 18 July 1968, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. M.A. HUSAIN

(India)

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PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. A. da COSTA GUIMARAES

Mr. LUIZ F.P. LAMPREIA

Mr. J. NOGUEIRA FILHO

Bulgaria:

Mr. K. CHRISTOV

Mr. B. KONSTANTINOV

Burma:

U CHIT MYAING

U KYAW MIN

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS

Mr. A.G. CAMPBELL

Mr. J.R. MORDEN

Mr. A. BERNIER

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. T. LAHODA

Mr. R. KLEIN

Mr. J. STRUCKA

Ethiopia:

Mr. A. ZELLEKE

India:

Mr. M.A. HUSAIN

Mr. N. KRISHNAN

Mr. K.P. JAIN

Italy:

Mr. R. CARACCILO

Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI

Mr. R. BERLENGHI

Mexico:

Mr. J. CASTANEDA

Mr. H. CARDENAS RODRIGUEZ

Nigeria:

Mr. B.O. TONWE

Poland:

Mr. H. JAROSZEK
Mr. A. SKOWRONSKI
Mr. H. STEPOSZ
Mr. S. DABROWA

Romania:

Mr. N. ECOBESCO
Mr. O. IONESCO
Mr. C. GEORGESCO
Mr. V. TARZIORU

Sweden:

Mrs. A. MYRDAL
Mr. A. EDELSTAM
Mr. U. ERICSSON
Mr. R. BOMAN

Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics:

Mr. A.A. ROSHCHIN
Mr. R.M. TIMERBAEV
Mr. M.P. SHELEPIN
Mr. V.V. SHUSTOV

United Arab Republic:

Mr. O. SIRRY
Mr. M. SHAKER

United Kingdom:

Mr. I.F. PORTER
Mr. W.N. HILLIER-FRY
Mr. R.I.T. CROMARTIE

United States of America:

Mr. W.C. FOSTER
Mr. G. BUNN
Mr. C. GLEYSTEEN
Mr. S. GRAYBEAL

Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. D. PROTITCH

Deputy Special Representative of the
Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN

1. The CHAIRMAN (India): I declare open the 382nd plenary meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.
2. In my capacity as the leader of the Indian delegation I should like to take this opportunity of welcoming to our midst the new representatives of Burma and Poland. I should also like to welcome back the representatives of Brazil and Mexico, who have been with us on some former occasions.
3. Mr. BURNS (Canada): First, on behalf of the Canadian delegation I should like to echo the Chairman's words of welcome to the new representative of Burma, U Chit Myaing, and the new representative of Poland, Mr. Jaroszek. We are also very glad indeed to see Mr. Castañeda and Mr. Azeredo da Silveira back with us again to help in our negotiations.
4. The statements of the representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom at our last meeting set out the general approach of the nuclear Powers which are members of this Committee to the task that lies before us in the weeks ahead. It is a little more than a month since we happily concluded our deliberations at the United Nations General Assembly and adopted resolution 2373 (XXII), which commended the non-proliferation treaty (ENDC/226) -- the product of our labours here over the last three years and more -- with the final improvements suggested by Members of the United Nations which are not members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. The treaty was opened for signature, as representatives know, on 1 July and has already been signed by about sixty States.
5. Canada had hoped to be among the first to sign, but our general election, and the consequent necessity to form a new Cabinet, has so far prevented our Government from taking the necessary formal decision. We hope to be in a position to sign in the near future.

General Assembly resolution 2373 (XXII) requested this Committee:

"...urgently to pursue negotiations on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament..."

This repeats the language of article VI of the non-proliferation treaty, which lays on parties the obligation quoted; and one is happy to note that the three nuclear Powers represented here have all signed the treaty.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

6. It has been repeated many times, by representatives of many countries, that the eventual effect and duration of the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons will depend on the action to be taken by nuclear Powers as required by article VI. It has therefore been very encouraging to hear the message from President Johnson that:

"Agreement has been reached between the Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States to enter in the nearest future into bilateral discussions on the limitation and the reduction of both offensive strategic nuclear weapons delivery systems and systems of defence against ballistic missiles. It is expected that the two sides will shortly reach a decision on the time and place for talks." (ENDC/228, p.1)

7. The representative of the Soviet Union also mentioned the agreement which has been reached to hold discussions. Among the proposals in the Soviet memorandum on urgent measures for stopping the arms race and for disarmament we find:

"The Soviet Government declares its readiness to undertake an exchange of views with the States concerned on the mutual limitation and subsequent reduction of strategic means of delivery of nuclear weapons." (ENDC/227, p.3)

8. Those statements encourage us to hope for fruitful developments. Of course we are anxious to hear when and where these negotiations are to be held. No doubt the negotiations will be mainly the concern of the super-Powers but the results will be so important for progress in disarmament generally that it is very desirable that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should have as much information about them as can be given without prejudicing their progress.

9. General Assembly resolution 2342 B (XXII) of 19 December 1967, as well as resolution 2373 (XXII), which I have just quoted, requests the Eighteen-Nation Committee to resume at the earliest date consideration of general and complete disarmament. The reason why past negotiations on this subject have made no progress is that it has been impossible to move towards agreement on how nuclear weapon delivery vehicles should be reduced and finally eliminated. If the recent promises of negotiations on the freeze and subsequent reduction of missiles bear fruit it may be

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

possible really to move towards general and complete disarmament. The prospects for some effective negotiation on general and complete disarmament, the Canadian delegation believes, are also enhanced by the decision embodied in a declaration accompanying the communiqué on the meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers at Reykjavik on 24-25 June; that declaration reads as follows:

"Ministers agreed that it was desirable that a process leading to mutual force reductions should be initiated. To that end they decided to make all necessary preparations for discussions on this subject with the USSR and other countries of Eastern Europe, and they call on them to join in this search for progress towards peace."

10. An agreement to halt the development of offensive and defensive missile systems should also make it much easier to reach an agreement on the prohibition of underground nuclear testing, thus completing the Moscow Treaty of 1963 (ENDC/100/Rev.1). However, we in this Committee should not wait until there actually is agreement on what is likely to be a very difficult subject of negotiation -- that is, the halting of the race in the production of missiles, offensive and defensive. We were glad to hear the representative of the United Kingdom, Mr. Mulley, say that the United Kingdom gives high priority to negotiations on a comprehensive test ban. In the opinion of the Canadian delegation there could be a useful discussion of the means of verification of prohibition of underground testing. We were most interested by Mr. Mulley's suggestions for progress and intend to give them further careful study. The Eighteen-Nation Committee could decide where the technology now stands and discuss possible forms of an agreement. We note that the representative of the Soviet Union said that his country is ready for an agreement "on the prohibition of underground nuclear tests on the basis of using national means of detection for control over this prohibition" (ENDC/PV. 381, para. 32).

11. Another point: if there is to be a prohibition of underground weapon testing special arrangements will have to be made if experiments in the use of nuclear explosives for peaceful purposes are to be continued. That will require a good deal of thought and discussion.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

12. It is unfortunate and regrettable that the fourth and fifth nuclear Powers, France and China, are continuing to test in the atmosphere. It is widely desired that both of these Powers should participate in disarmament discussions, but while they are engaged in perfecting their nuclear weapons it is not likely that they will do so. We should remember, however, that both of these nuclear Powers have stated that they are ready to engage in talks with all the other nuclear Powers with a view to complete nuclear disarmament. It may at the moment be much too optimistic to envisage such a conference in which all five nuclear Powers would take part. Nevertheless, it is something which will have to happen at some time if there is eventually to be complete nuclear disarmament.

13. Besides the prohibition of underground testing which most speakers in the resumed twenty-second session of the General Assembly said should follow the achievement of the non-proliferation treaty, many of them felt that the cessation of the production of fissile material for weapons purposes was another measure which ought to be undertaken very soon. We have read what is in the Soviet memorandum (ENDC/227) on further partial measures of disarmament in regard to ceasing production of nuclear weapons, but the phrasing, in the English version at any rate, leaves it a little ambiguous whether the USSR would be prepared to engage in negotiations on this matter if the People's Republic of China and France were not a party to them, whether it could begin negotiations with the United States and the United Kingdom. The Canadian delegation hopes that the representative of the Soviet Union will soon clear up this point for us. Referring to this proposal Mr. Roshchin said:

"The Soviet delegation considers that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament must make its contribution to the solution of this important international problem, by helping with its work to achieve an agreement on the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons and the destruction of all stockpiles." (ENDC/PV.381, para. 31)

14. Besides being a step towards ending the manufacture of nuclear weapons, stopping production of fissile material for weapons use would be a highly desirable measure for reinforcing the non-proliferation treaty. If it were agreed to, the obligations of the nuclear Powers in respect of inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency could be made the same as those of the States not having nuclear weapons, and this would remove a grievance of the latter group of States, which point to the differing obligations as to inspection as one of the inequities of the non-proliferation treaty.

(Mr. Burns, Canada)

15. We were greatly interested in the views expressed by Mr. Mulley on the need to do something to bring up to date the Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons. This subject has attracted much attention in the United Nations General Assembly and elsewhere. The United Kingdom, it is to be noted, takes a different view from that expressed in the Soviet memorandum in its sixth point, and no doubt other delegations will be expressing views on this subject in due course.

16. The Canadian delegation has, of course, noted the proposals concerning a number of other matters contained in the Soviet memorandum. We know that several of these proposals have been discussed by Soviet representatives elsewhere, for example in the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on the Seabed. However, as we do not wish to prolong our statement unduly, we shall not comment on the substance of these proposals at present, but shall do so if and when they come forward for discussion in the agenda of the Conference. As I see it, our first task is to reach agreement on the area in which negotiations should next take place in this Committee now that the negotiations regarding the non-proliferation treaty have been concluded and the treaty has been opened for signature. That is to say, we need to decide on an agenda.

17. The Committee would not, in our view, be proceeding in an orderly manner if members were to range over several widely differing problems, even if they were generally related. This does not mean that in our view the Committee should restrict itself to discussing only one subject -- or even two. I hope, therefore, that the co-Chairmen will take careful note of the procedural views of the other delegations --- and I hope that other delegations will be giving those views quite soon --- so that the recommendations regarding the work of the Committee, which we hope the co-Chairmen will be able to agree upon in the near future, may embody these suggestions which will help to carry forward constructive negotiations and make the best possible use of the time this Committee has for its work this summer.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 382nd plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador M.A. Husain, representative of India.

"A statement was made by the representative of Canada.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Tuesday, 23 July 1968, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.

